

RNC RESEARCH DIVISION
JANUARY 28, 1972

SENATOR EDWARD M. KENNEDY

D E F E N S E S P E N D I N G

Excerpts from "National Priorities and the Defense Budget: The Need for New Realities," Senator Kennedy's statement before the Committee on National Priorities of the Democratic Policy Committee, February 25, 1970:

"Aside from Vietnam, the military and political developments of the last two decades make possible other reductions in defense spending -- if we are willing to be realistic. The United States has already constructed at enormous expense, a powerful second strike capability. For the foreseeable future our Polaris submarines, supplemented by our land-based missiles, will remain an effective deterrent against nuclear attack. Thus, there is no clear need at this time to spend vast sums of money to deploy new strategic weapons systems.

"We should not repeat the mistakes of the fifties and sixties, when we overreacted to cold war fears and helped to stimulate the spiraling arms race. In my view, the Administration's Safeguard system is just such an overreaction.

...

"Last year, I believed that Safeguard was a waste of money. Nothing I have heard of or learned since then has changed my views.

...

"We should also examine whether both the Navy and Air Force are presently planning to procure tactical aircraft which use far more sophisticated and expensive equipment than is really necessary.

...

"Since the federal budget is being sharply cut in so many areas, no aspect of military expenditures should be free from scrutiny.

...

"I think I have demonstrated that the President's budget request for the Department of Defense is not rock bottom. Further major cuts can and will be made perfectly consistently with an enhanced national security.

...

"...if we do not reduce and reallocate military spending, we take the risk that millions of our citizens and particularly our young people will lose faith in their country and the values for which it stands."

KENNEDY - DEFENSE SPENDING
PAGE 2

Remarks upon President Nixon's proposed 1972 budget, Congressional Record,
January 29, 1971:

"I am . . . concerned over the harsh way in which the budget treats some of our most important domestic programs. Predictably, defense spending is reverting to its old upward habit."

Congressional Record, June 29, 1971:

" . . . I fully support the Proxmire-Modjeski amendment to limit Pentagon spending to \$58 billion for fiscal year 1972. I urge the Senate to accept the amendment today, as part of the pending 'committed resolution,' so that the ceiling may take effect for the entire new fiscal year that begins on Thursday.

"Today, the Senate has the opportunity to translate our action on the SST earlier this spring into an across-the-board vote on the principle of reordering our national priorities. Like a colossus of the ancient world, the Pentagon budget stands astride all our hopes for real action on the countless domestic issue (sic). . ."

NEW YORK TIMES/HANOI LETTERS ON POW'S & TERMINAL DATE - January 1972

NEW YORK TIMES EDITOR SENDS LETTER TO PHAM VAN DONG

Hanoi VNA in English to VNA Paris 1354 GMT 15 Jan 72 B

["Message from A.M. Rosenthal, New York TIMES"]

[Text] Honorable Pham Van Dong, Foreign Ministry, Hanoi

"In view of the conflicting accounts we have had recently [on the] negotiating position of your government and PRG on ways to end the Indochina war, we invite your answers to the following questions because we believe they can clarify the situation.

1--If the United States sets a firm troop withdrawal date would you agree to the release of American prisoners in your control?

2--Would you negotiate on military withdrawal and the release of prisoners completely separate from questions pertaining to the political future of Vietnam?

3--Which of the following must be wholly withdrawn or halted to obtain the release of all American prisoners in your control?

- 1/ American ground troops in South Vietnam.
- 2/ American transport and logistic air support to South Vietnamese forces.
- 3/ American bombing in North Vietnam.
- 4/ American air reconnaissance in North Vietnam.
- 5/ American bombing in South Vietnam.
- 6/ American bombing in Laos and Cambodia.
- 7/ American airbases in Southeast Asia outside Indochina.
- 8/ American military advisory activities in South Vietnam.
- 9/ American military aid shipments to South Vietnam.
- 10/ American economic aid to South Vietnam.

4--Are there any additional conditions for the release of all American prisoners?

5--Assuming an agreement is possible-under the terms of Question 3, how soon could all prisoners be released and how much time would be available to arrange the American disengagements?

6--Would the elements of such an agreement be separate? Could some prisoners be released before others in exchange for some acts of disengagement?

7--What in concrete terms is the meaning of your demand that the United States withdraw all political support from the present Saigon government? How could such a withdrawal be acted upon?

8--Quite apart from negotiations for withdrawal and prisoner release, under what conditions would you agree to a larger international peace conference on all Indochina? Who should attend? At what stage could such negotiations prove profitable?"

A.M. Rosenthal, Managing editor, the New York TIMES

HANOI'S REJECTION OF NEW YORK TIMES QUESTIONS & PROPOSALS

Hanoi VNA in French to VNA Paris 1340 GMT 15 Jan 72 B-

[Reply by Ngo Dien, head of DRV Foreign Ministry's Information and Press Department to A.M. Rosenthal's message to Pham Van Dong]

[Text] Mr A.M. Rosenthal, managing-editor of the New York TIMES.

Dear sir: Concerning your questions addressed to Premier Pham Van Dong, I am authorized to draw your attention to the following points:

--The fundamental problem is the cessation of the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam and the restoration of peace in Vietnam with respect for the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people. Therefrom, the aspiration of the Vietnamese people for a peace in independence and freedom will be satisfied, as well as the wish of the American people who are demanding the extrication of their country from the current quagmire in Vietnam and the repatriation of all their sons engaged in the ranks of the U.S. expeditionary corps in Vietnam, including the U.S. militarymen captured in Vietnam.

--At present, forced to carry out a gradual withdrawal of U.S. troops, President Nixon has not, however, resigned himself in putting an end to his war of aggression. Implementing his Vietnamization policy, he intends to pursue it through the Nguyen Van Thieu clique and the Saigon puppet army, which the United States has provided with colossal aid and massive participation of the U.S. Air Force and Navy in combat.

--By simultaneously raising the issue of prisoners of war and that of U.S. troop withdrawal, without renouncing all commitment to and support for the Nguyen Van Thieu puppet administration, President Nixon does not aim at bringing a solution to the above-mentioned fundamental problem, but simply at placating the legitimate demands of the American people. In fact, he aims at evading the pressure of U.S. and world public opinion with a view to prolonging and extending the war in Indochina.

--Concerning the solution to the Vietnamese problem, the DRV Government approves of and fully supports the seven points put forward on 1 July 1971 by the PRORSV. You can find in this the answer to the questions which you raised in your telegram.

In refusing to comply with these seven points, the Nixon administration has turned away from the path leading to a correct solution of the Vietnam problem, rejecting at the same time the opportunity to bring home last Christmas all U.S. militarymen, including those who have been captured in Vietnam.

I am, sir, your very truly,

Ngo Dien, head of the Information and Press Department of the DRV Foreign Ministry. "

Hanoi's Cable to Times Cites Peace Aim

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20 —

North Vietnam has reiterated, in a message to The New York Times, its apparent position that American prisoners will not be released until the Nixon Administration agrees both to withdraw all its forces from South Vietnam and to end its support of the Government of President Nguyen Van Thieu.

The statement was virtually identical to comments made by spokesmen for Hanoi in recent weeks and to declarations in the news media. It was sent last Sunday to A. M. Rosenthal, managing editor of The Times, in reply to eight questions cabled by Mr. Rosenthal to Premier Pham Van Dong of North Vietnam on Jan. 4.

The Times had sought clarification of Hanoi's negotiating position, specifically whether the prisoners would be released in return for a firm withdrawal date. Critics of the Administration's policy believe the setting of such a date would result in the release of the prisoners. The Administration has maintained that Hanoi also wants Washington to end its support of the Saigon Government as part of a seven-point "all or nothing" negotiating position.

Nixon's Statement

In a television interview on Jan. 2, Mr. Nixon said that the possibility of a total troop withdrawal in exchange for the release of the prisoners had been discussed with the North Vietnamese at the Paris peace talks but that Hanoi had "totally rejected" such an approach.

Senator George McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota, charged next day that Mr. Nixon had deceived the public. Mr. McGovern, who met with North Vietnamese officials in Paris last summer, has insisted that Hanoi will recognize an announcement of firm withdrawal date as representing an end of support for Saigon and will release the nearly 400 prisoners.

The Times in its cable asked, "in view of the conflicting accounts" about Hanoi's position, "if the United States set a firm troop withdrawal date, would you agree to the release of American prisoners in your control?"

Mr. Dong was also asked: "Would you negotiate on military withdrawals and the release of prisoners completely separate from questions pertaining to the political future of Vietnam?"

There were also such questions as what constituted an American withdrawal and what constituted the end of political support of Saigon.

On Jan. 6, before The Times had received a reply to its questions, the North Vietnamese spokesman in Paris, Xuan Thuy, said publicly that if the United States wanted to disengage from the war and to repatriate its prisoners, it should "give up aggression, stop the

Vietnamization of the war, pull out from South Vietnam all the troops, stop backing the Nguyen Van Thieu bellicose puppet group."

Mr. Thuy's remarks were printed on the front page of The Times on Jan. 7.

Hanoi's answer, signed by Ngo Dien, director of the Press and Information Department, was sent to The Times through the North Vietnamese mission in Paris on Jan. 15. Without answering any of Mr. Rosenthal's questions directly, Mr. Dien repeated Hanoi's attack on the Nixon Administration.

"At the present time, placed in the obligation of carrying out a gradual withdrawal of United States troops, President Nixon has 'nonetheless not resigned himself to putting an end to his war of aggression,' he said. 'Putting into effect his policy of Vietnamization, he means to continue it through the intermediary of the clique of Nguyen Van Thieu.'"

Mr. Dien added that "by raising at the same time the 'prisoners' question and the withdrawal of United States troops without renouncing all engagement and support in favor of the Nguyen Van Thieu puppet clique, President Nixon aims not to bring a solution to the aforementioned fundamental problem, but simply to allay the legitimate demands of the American people."

U.S. Summarizes Exchange

On Monday Mr. Rosenthal thanked Mr. Dien by cable for his reply but said that The Times, after much consideration, had decided not to publish the material "since its content is identical to previous statements made by your Government and subsequently printed by The New York Times."

The Times decided to report on the exchange after it learned that the United States Government had obtained Hanoi's reply to the paper as well as the paper's questions and that a

brief summary of the exchange was included in a weekly report distributed for Government use by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, a bureau of the Central Intelligence Agency. The report is made available to newsmen covering the State Department.

The report said that the Vietnamese Communist media had so far not mentioned Mr. Rosenthal's communication to Mr. Dong.

The Government summary said:

"The Vietnamese news agency's service channel to Paris on the 15th carried Rosenthal's questions along with a message from Ngo Dien. Ignoring Rosenthal's specific questions, Dien implied that Point I, on United States withdrawal and prisoner release, could not be separated from Point II, on a political settlement in South Vietnam."

U.S. Lists Missing Men

PARIS, Jan. 20 (Reuters)—The United States today presented to the Hanoi delegation to the Vietnam peace talks a list of 14 American pilots shot down over North Vietnam and asked why they were not on the North Vietnamese list of United States prisoners of war.

Heyward Isham, the deputy American delegate, told the North Vietnamese that all 14 airmen were "known to have been alive on the ground in North Vietnam, or were at one time actually identified by you as having been captured."

Just over a year ago the North Vietnamese published a list of 339 captured American servicemen, saying the list was "complete and final." The United States delegation has frequently challenged that statement and said that many more United States military men were missing.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

JANUARY 21, 1972 10

RICHARD WILSON

Perpetuating the Deception on the POW Issue

A cruel deception is being perpetuated by heedless men that all President Nixon need do to secure the release of prisoners of war held in North Vietnam is to declare a specific date for complete withdrawal of all American forces.

The depth of this deception is emphasized in a response to questions submitted to the Hanoi government by the New York Times which the newspaper decided not to publish. The reasons leading to this decision are curious.

On Page 10 of its Friday edition under a headline saying "Hanoi's Cable to Times Cites Peace Aim," the Times gave this main reason for not publishing Hanoi's response to the questions submitted by its managing editor:

The response was no different than previous positions stated at the Paris peace negotiations by Hanoi's representatives and published at the time in the Times.

This excuse for not publishing Hanoi's response can be questioned for several reasons. First, the cable was an official statement direct from Hanoi and not filtered through the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris. Second, the Times, in an interview earlier with the head of the Communist delegation, had spread the impression that releasing prisoners of war could be separated from other issues at the Paris conference.

And, third, the Hanoi response might have helped to clear the minds of those who cultivate the deception that the prisoner of war question can be separated from North Vietnam's insistence that all troops must be withdrawn, all support to the Thieu government be withdrawn and the policy of Vietnamization be abandoned. The Times has often published, and makes a special point of publishing, important public documents. It confined itself in this case to publishing merely a summary of the exclusive statement it received from Hanoi, and did not relate this response to the questions it had asked except to say that none had been answered directly.

Nor, it was indicated, would the Times have done this much had it not been for the fact that the foreign broadcast information service of the Central Intelligence Agency had published in its weekly report the substance of the exchange in its regular function of monitoring Hanoi's public communications. The exchange between Hanoi and the Times managing editor thus became known to reporters covering the State Department.

Furthermore, a good many readers would conclude that the Hanoi response confirmed beyond any shadow of doubt the Nixon administration's claim that North Vietnam has flatly turned down a prisoner release in exchange for a firm withdrawal date. Sen. George McGovern, a candidate for president, has, in effect, called Nixon a liar for making that claim.

Aside from revealing the hazards of a newspaper trying to conduct, or at least influence, foreign affairs, the incident of this unpublished document from Hanoi nails down hard what the Communist government will settle for. It will settle for the humiliation of the United States, complete renunciation of the Thieu government, and an end to all support for the elected government of South Vietnam. Then — maybe — it will release American prisoners of war.

The Times could have placed these facts in high relief by publishing its questions and Hanoi's cabled response, but it did not do so.

McGovern, and more recently Sen. Mike Mansfield, persist in the notion that it is all simple. Just announce a complete withdrawal and Hanoi will interpret that as letting the Thieu government go down the drain and promptly release the prisoners. The war will then be over.

Hanoi's cable makes it a lot clearer: President Nixon must pull totally out of Vietnam, stop backing the Nguyen Van Thieu bellicose clique and conform to all seven points of Hanoi's peace proposal, which would accomplish the complete humiliation of Nixon in his attempt to achieve a constructive end to the war.

Nixon tried, in his recent television interview, to open the door a little wider by intimating that the last troops would be withdrawn when the prisoners had been released, or concurrently. That little crack in the door might have widened to permit a view of compromises on both Hanoi's unaltered seven points and Nixon's commitment to Vietnamization and to the Thieu government.

But the door was slammed shut by Hanoi with a resounding whack loud enough, certainly, to be heard by all who pursue the simplification of prisoner repatriation in exchange for setting a final and total withdrawal date.

THE EVENING STAR

Washington, D. C., Monday, January 24, 1972

A-11

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POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM
AND CHRONOLOGY OF ELECTIONS - - 1965-1971

South Vietnam's Elections

Even in the midst of war South Vietnam has made considerable progress in its political evolution since the election of a Constitutional Assembly in 1966 and since the first national election of a President and National Assembly in 1967.

A series of elections at all levels of Vietnamese society during the past five years has been actively contested by a large number of candidates and parties. This is encouraging because self-determination is not simply a single election or a single man, but a process of nation-building which takes time to take root and to flourish, especially so in time of war.

The fact that in the recent Presidential race two of President Thieu's major opponents chose to withdraw from the race is regrettable. However, they were eligible to run and they withdrew voluntarily. They themselves chose not to campaign for office. In the resulting referendum, 87% of the eligible voters participated and President Thieu and his respected Buddhist running mate, Tran Van Huong, received 94% of the votes cast.

The fact that the constitutional process has taken root in Vietnam at the national level can be seen in the recent elections for one-half of South Vietnam's Senate and elections for the Lower House.

-- In the Senate elections of August 1970, sixteen slates competed, with opposition Buddhists winning the most votes among the three winning slates.

-- In the House elections of August 1971, 1, 200 candidates representing some 12 major political parties and groups contended for the 159 seats, and the opposition Buddhists won the most seats.

In Vietnam what happens in the countryside is as important, and may be more so, than what happens in the capital. And in South Vietnam's countryside, elections have been held in over 95% of the nation's villages for local chiefs and councils. These local officials are in charge of local government, local development assistance and local defense.

The Communist Pattern

South Vietnam's pattern of competitive parties and elections and local self-government contrasts sharply with the monopolistic system imposed in Stalinist North Vietnam. There the Communist Party

- 2 -

monopolizes all aspects of political, economic and cultural life. From central to local levels the Party's apparatus totally censors any diversity or opposition. The nine old ideologues on the Party's Politburo have brutally imposed their reactionary system on the people of North Vietnam and they have never risked the test of competitive elections, rival political parties, open press or criticism in any area under their control.

The South Vietnamese, including many who were able to escape from the Hanoi regime, know this history of Communist rule in Vietnam. They know how Ho's Communist Party wiped out its six coalition partners in the brief coalition experiment of 1945 -1946. They know how the Communists couped and then monopolized the anti-French front. They know how the Stalinists imposed their "peoples' dictatorship" and "collectivization" in North Vietnam after 1954. They know how Hanoi's army and the cadre of its southern front gave a preview of Communist control when they abducted and/or murdered over 5,000 civilians on their "blood debts" list in the city of Hue during the Tet offensive of 1968.

Perspective

In South Vietnam the Communists have continuously announced their intent to smash any elections and to murder those who run for office. In spite of such Communist threats, however, candidate and voter participation has generally been exceptionally high in the series of national and local elections held in South Vietnam since 1965. The Communists, who have never risked the test of any political competition, must now face the problem that they have become something of a political anachronism in South Vietnam.

Many anti-Vietnam critics tend to measure South Vietnam by some ideal standard. They tend to forget that the South Vietnamese are under the pressure of a war imposed by North Vietnam's armies, that the Marxist-Leninist alternative proposed by Hanoi and its Front is a totally Stalinist one, and that there has been substantial political progress in South Vietnam. They tend to forget that under the pressure of war, Britain during World War II did not hold elections of any kind, or that during the U. S. Civil War President Lincoln found it necessary to suspend the right of Habeas Corpus.

A fair perspective is essential. At this important moment in South Vietnam's history when the Vietnamese are assuming more and more of the burden of their own defense, the Government of Vietnam proved able to hold national elections and to win a vote of confidence. The national Parliament and Vietnam's 20 major political parties and 50 newspapers, while reflecting a wide-range of opinion and opposition, can be expected to continue on the path of growing participation in Vietnam's political development.

CHRONOLOGY OF ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM SINCE 1965

May 30, 1965 -- Province Level Elections. These elections were conducted throughout South Viet Nam for provincial and municipal councils. Government of Viet Nam officials and ARVN personnel were prohibited from running. Throughout South Viet Nam, 1,000 candidates contested 471 seats. Of the 4.7 million registered voters, 3.5 million, or 74% cast ballots. To make voting easier for those who read with difficulty, each candidate chose an identifying symbol to emblazon on his campaign posters. The major organized labor confederation elected 13 of its 16 candidates. In the central provinces, candidates associated with Buddhist organizations made strong showings. Foreign press observers termed the elections the most honest Viet Nam had ever had up to that time:

September 11, 1966 -- Nationwide election for a 117-member Constituent Assembly brought out some 4.3 million voters, representing 80.8 per cent of the registered electorate and over 55 per cent of the estimated population of voting age, despite a major Viet Cong effort to disrupt the elections.

September 27, 1966 -- The Constituent Assembly convened and prepared a democratic Constitution which was promulgated on April 1, 1967. Constitution provides for a modified presidential system, a bicameral legislature, an independent judiciary, a basic bill of rights for citizens.

March-June 1967 -- The first round of village and hamlet elections held. These elections were bitterly opposed by the Communists, who killed six and kidnapped 18 candidates, killed 15 and kidnapped 38 voters, in 555 terrorist incidents. Despite Viet Cong attempts to frustrate the elections, 2,511,543 voters (77.6 per cent of those registered) elected officials in 984 villages and 4,600 hamlets.

September 3, 1967 -- Election of President Nguyen Van Thieu, Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, and 60 members of the Upper House of the National Assembly. There were 8,824 polling stations in the 50 provinces and municipalities of Vietnam. Out of the 5,853,251 registered voters, 83.3% went to the polls. There were 11 candidates for the Presidency and 480 candidates for the 60 Senate seats. The Thieu-Ky slate received 34.8% of the vote, twice as much as the next closest slate which received 17.2%. Eighty percent of the votes went to candidates who advocated no compromise with the Viet Cong. In addition to 116 official observers, more than 600 foreign correspondents, cameramen, and TV crews, representing the world's major news services, overwhelmingly concluded that the Government of South Viet Nam had made every attempt to hold an open election, that voting officials had demonstrated a high level of efficiency, and that the elections themselves were free and fair by any reasonable standards.

October 22, 1967 -- Election of a 137-member Lower House with representation based on population and including deputies from minority groups. Seventy three percent of the registered voters of South Vietnam selected 135 men and two women for the Lower House membership widely representative of both national and local political interests. The major religious groups were widely represented with about 65 Buddhists, some 35 Catholics, and the remainder split among the various other religious groups: Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, Confucianists, and others.

October 31, 1967 -- Inauguration of President Nguyen Van Thieu and Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky. Several of the defeated Presidential candidates took positions in the national government.

March 1969 -- Village and hamlet elections took place in more than 3,600 communities throughout South Vietnam on four successive Sundays in March. Over one million men and women, representing nearly 90% of the eligible electorate, went to the polls and elected 7,741 leaders -- village council members, hamlet chiefs, and deputy hamlet chiefs.

June 1969 -- Almost 90% of the eligible voters turned out to choose 1,121 hamlet chiefs and 1,092 village council members in rural elections held on the first four Sundays in June. It was the second phase of the Government's program to hold country-wide rural elections before the end of 1969. Combined with previous election results, these June elections brought fully-elected councils to 1,891 of Vietnam's 2,130 villages and locally-elected chiefs to 8,776 of its 10,775 hamlets

July 11, 1969 -- President Thieu proposed elections in which "all political parties and groups, including the 'NLF'... can participate... if they renounce violence and pledge themselves to accept the results of the elections." To provide special guarantees to ensure fairness, he proposed the establishment of an electoral commission with NLF participation, and an international supervisory body -- in his six-point proposal for a political settlement of the war in Vietnam.

March, April and May 1970 -- Village Council elections. By early 1970 council elections had been held in more than 2,000 of the 2,300 villages of South Vietnam. In March 1970 the three-year terms of the councils elected in March 1967 expired and by May 1970 more than 900 second round elections had been conducted. Elections will continue over the next three years as the three-year terms of the councils expire. Voting percentages averaged about 85 percent of the

-5-

registered voters, versus 78 percent for 1967. There was a major turnover in village council membership, averaging around 50 percent. A significant percentage of those elected were local officials, Regional and Popular Force and Revolutionary Development personnel.

June 28, 1970 - - Province/Municipal elections. Elections were held for city councils in the cities of Saigon, Vung Tau, Dalat, Cam Ranh, Hue and Danang and provincial councils in each of the 44 provinces. Seventy-three percent of those eligible cast ballots. Increasing interest was demonstrated in these elections by political parties and religious associations, but most candidates ran without publicizing party affiliations.

August 30, 1970 - - Upper House Elections. Sixteen slates of ten men each contested for the thirty seats up for re-election in South Vietnam's Senate. The leading ticket in the balloting was the Buddhist slate. (The opposition Buddhists had boycotted the 1967 elections.) The second winning slate was a ticket generally in support of the present South Vietnamese administration and its policies, and the third leading slate was an Independent Opposition slate. More than 65% of the eligible voters of the country participated in the voting. Representatives of the 13 losing slates described the elections as the most honest they had ever experienced.

August 29, 1971 - - Lower House Elections. 1,242 candidates competed for the 159 seats (7 added) in South Vietnam's Lower House. Preliminary assessments indicate that approximately 53% of the newly-elected deputies might be considered pro-government, 37% oppositionist, and 10% independent. Of the 119 incumbents seeking re-election only 41 were successful and 16 seats were reserved for representatives of ethnic minority groups in constituencies where they are most numerous. More than 78% of the eligible voters of the country participated in the voting which was the culmination of a hotly contested campaign in every locality throughout the country.

October 3, 1971 - - Presidential and Vice Presidential Elections

In an election in which 87% of the eligible voters participated, President Nguyen Van Thieu and his Vice Presidential running-mate, the respected southern Buddhist leader, Tran Van Hung, received 94% of the votes cast. With the two major contenders, Generals Minh and Ky, choosing to withdraw from the Presidential race, President Thieu decided to hold a referendum or vote of confidence in his policies. The voters thus could either vote for the Thieu/Hung slate or they could express a negative view by boycotting the elections or defacing their ballots. The high turnout and high rate of support for the Thieu/Hung ticket, as well as the active post-electoral participation of the opposition Buddhists and a variety of other groups in South Vietnam's newly elected Lower House and Senate, were generally viewed as reflecting increasing political stability in Vietnam.

SENATOR EDMUND MUSKIE

VIETNAM BOMBING

"It is a risk of a wider war if the trend continues, maybe something more horrible."

Detroit, Michigan
April 15, 1972

THE
PRESENT

The renewed bombing in North Vietnam has prompted a pessimistic Muskie to lash out at the Administration's policy. On ABC-TV's Issues and Answers, Muskie called the bombing a "shocking confession of failure" and added that it was a "dangerous" and "reckless" policy.

Muskie also said that other nations would be alienated by the thought of "the world's greatest military power...sending these waves of bombers over a little Asian country dropping enormous bombs..."
(April 16, 1972)

On April 17, Muskie pledged that if he were elected President, he would stop the bombing and withdraw all forces within 60 days of his inauguration.

THE
PAST

Sen. Muskie's present position is well defined, but a question still remains - where was he when the LBJ administration was conducting daily bombing raids over North Vietnam? The answer is that Muskie was in the Johnson camp -- one of the strongest supporters of that Administration's Vietnam policy.

A look at the record throws into doubt the credibility of the Senator's present remarks:

1965

In a speech to Democratic members of the Maine legislature Muskie said the policy of applying the pressure of an air attack was justified by Hanoi's sensitivity "about the vulnerability of its rather rudimentary industrial complex."

Portland Press Herald
February 19, 1965

1966

"But let us ... press forward in a way that will convince the enemy we mean what we say."

"If we mean what I think we mean - to convince our advisory that a continuation of the war is unacceptable in his own interests - then let us do so in a way that will make our policy and our national will clear and credible to him...only when he is no longer in doubt on this point will he begin to doubt the wisdom of his present course."

Speech ...
Allied Jewish Appeal
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
February 28, 1966

1967

In March, 1967, Muskie inserted an article into the Congressional Record written by Swiss editor Eric Mettler. Muskie singled out this paragraph from the Mettler article for special notice as to the success of the bombing raids:

"The bombing has seriously checked production, distribution and supplies. Hundreds of thousands of men are required to make only the most urgent repairs on all that is destroyed daily."

Congressional Record
March 22, 1967

1968

During the 1968 elections, Muskie cautioned against rushing into a bombing halt.

In Indianapolis Muskie was asked whether stopping the bombing would not "play into the hands of the Communists?" Muskie responded:

"That's exactly what I meant when I said we must have a meaningful movement toward peace before the bombing halt is used."

New York Times
September 10, 1968

At the University of Kansas Muskie said he "would be willing to lean in the direction of taking the risk "of a bombing halt if it would move the U.S. to the end of the fighting and a political settlement of the war."

Washington Post
September 21, 1968

Later in the campaign Muskie confessed.

"I'm sure of only one thing, that the bombing halt of March 31 did not achieve what we hoped it would do..."

"I think all of us felt that the 90 per cent halt was a substantial recognition of the proposition that we made, that we were hopeful it would have the result we felt it might. Well it did not."

Baltimore Sun
October 5, 1968

Le Monde

No. 158, April 29, 1972

5, rue des Italiens 75 PARIS 9e Tel. 7709129

THE US AND VIETNAM

A TOUCH OF 'CREDIBLE' IRRATIONALITY

BY MICHEL TATU

B-52s over Haiphong: Mr Kissinger needed all the cynicism and Machiavellianism for which he is noted to think that one up and to persuade President Nixon to undertake something from which even that master of escalation Lyndon Johnson shrank.

The President's Security Adviser has never made a secret of his philosophy. In his view, there can be no set-piece situation in dealing with Communists. It is not a matter of rolling them back, or blocking them — at least, not systematically. But America's master-strategists should not hesitate to exploit every favourable situation, and even to "punish" the adversary for his mistakes.

Hasn't Mr Kissinger suggested, for example, in his analysis of the Korean War, that America should have capitalised on its strong position to roll the North Koreans back and lay down a different demarcation line from that of 1960? Moral considerations, of course, have little to do with this doctrine, at least not as such. They are rather an overall strategic element in that they can mobilise public opinion and hamper the action of the leaders in a democratic system.

Position of strength

Mr Kissinger and his Special Action Group must have made a similar calculation in reference to Haiphong. That it has never before been bombed this way does not mean that it shouldn't be done now. It's not because Mr Nixon will be going to Moscow in less than a month that he should show moderation. On the contrary, the new situation strengthens Mr Nixon's hand in his dealings with the Russians. With these people, the approach from a position of strength is the only way to obtain fruitful discussions.

The effect of surprise, and even more the sight of a cold determination, has not only the advantage of disarming the opponent, but of reversing roles, for until now these qualities were a Communist prerogative. Better to do without a summit altogether than arrange one between the usual unmitigated "tough" and a "softie."

The question now is whether the plan will succeed: if not with the North Vietnamese, for whom Mr Nixon and Mr Kissinger quite clearly don't give a hoot, at least with Mr Brezhnev, without whose material the conflict would not be what it is, and which America today regards as the principal cause of its troubles.

Several factors must have been deemed favourable by the Special Action Group:

1. The South Vietnamese would not be able to proceed without US air cover, but in any case they continue to fight. The contradictory stories that came from An Loc, the North, and the Central Highlands made it clear that the Vietnamisation programme has at least partly succeeded. That does not mean that Washington did not consider the situation so — far from it — but Mr Nixon may be hoping that the Saigon forces will not collapse before the disruptive effect of the bombing on North Vietnam.

in the south — that is to say, several weeks from now.

2. The weakest spot in Mr Nixon's strategy is the opposition from Democratic candidates in the presidential race and from US pacifists. However, the slowness with which the public has reacted to the new escalation of the war may have persuaded him that he still has a relatively free hand. The Communist offensive which began early this month in South Vietnam did not seriously disturb the US electoral scene. Even now, Senator Hubert Humphrey's rather lackadaisical criticism of the bombing shows that the official White House line about the North invading the South is having a telling effect on a large part of the public. All that may change in the next few weeks, however, and Mr Nixon has taken the risk of seeing the Vietnam war become an election issue. It may well be that he thought he would have to raise the issue anyway if the Communists scored a victory over the Saigon Army.

3. Militarily, the Russians are badly placed to react. It is hard to see what their navy can do against the awesome American armada in the Gulf of Tonkin, or against the vast US air force dominating the Indochinese sky. They will no doubt succeed in sending their North Vietnamese allies even more sophisticated offensive weapons, such as missiles capable of threatening the Seventh Fleet, and planes and better SAM weapons. With the ocean route now less dependable, all this material must now be detoured through China, with all the complications that entails.

In short, apart from the usual verbal protests, reaction is going to be slow and measured, in line with Soviet style in recent years. It is an escalation of the same sort which came in answer to the 1970 Israeli air sorties deep into the heart of Egypt.

A hoodoo

All this notwithstanding, the question is whether Soviet leaders can politically stomach an affront and welcome Mr Nixon in Moscow as though nothing had happened. A hoodoo seems to be hanging over US presidential projects for such visits. Twice before they had to be called off: the first time in May 1960, when a U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union, the second in 1968 when the invasion of Czechoslovakia forced Mr Johnson to call off a visit to Moscow which he had hoped would be the crowning achievement of his career.

The situation is much less clear today, but everything will depend on the answers given to the following two questions in the next few days:

1. Will the bombing be extended to other big cities of North Vietnam and on the same murderous and systematic scale? The damage caused to the port of Haiphong on the night of April 13-14 appears to have been tolerable, and a pause seems to have been decided on in the bombing. But after decades of

attacks last February (which were in fact much less destructive than the recent ones) and the very friendly welcome given to Mr Nixon in Peking, Mr Brezhnev may have to give a different complexion to the President's visit. He could even call it off if the bombing became especially heavy and spectacular in May. It is true, though, that Mr Kosygin met Mr Johnson while the North was being systematically bombed in 1967, but he did not invite him to Moscow.

2. Does Mr Brezhnev really want to meet Mr Nixon personally and as soon as possible? The Americans are inclined to think so, but it shouldn't be forgotten that the invitation was originally sent out under special circumstances: vexed by Mr Nixon's announcement that he intended to go to Peking, the Kremlin wanted to make its presence felt and remind Washington there are serious problems to discuss. In short, Moscow wanted to make sure it was not going to be dealt out of the big game.

It was only afterwards that the main lines of subjects on which agreement might be possible began to emerge — the question of strategic weapons in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, trade, and so on. Mr Brezhnev may believe that he has boosted his stock sufficiently since then with the Bengal operation, the overtures to Japan, and the treaty with Iraq, and that an agreement on strategic arms could now be concluded without a summit meeting. The decisive test for the superpowers is now Vietnam, and it may perhaps be in the interests of each side to await the consequences of initiatives taken by the other.

No abandonment

One thing is certain, however: even if, in the absence of a strong reaction from Mr Brezhnev, the Communist offensive should flag, weakened by interruptions to supply lines from the north, the war will go on with or without "Vietnamisation." David, in fact, doesn't have to play along with a Goliath in Machiavellian clothing, and one can hardly see how North Vietnamese leaders could, because of the pressure of a new escalation which was no surprise, abandon years of hard work and sacrifice.

At best (for Washington and its allies), the offensive will be halted like the Tet attack at the cost of enormous losses for both sides. But President Nguyen Van Thieu will patiently have to mend the fragile pacification programme. If the worse comes to the worst, Mr Nixon will press on from escalation to escalation in the same infernal cycle which ruined his predecessor's career.

The only difference is that the icy mind of his adviser will think up unexpected and no doubt more dangerous ripostes. As a good disciple of Von Clausewitz, Mr Kissinger holds that a touch of irrationality is more "credible" sometimes and impresses the adversary more than displays of force. If Nasser's confidant Ahmed Heikal is to be believed, this was what impressed Khrushchev in John Foster Dulles and encouraged him to make concessions. That lesson has not been lost on the man who is

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

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11

kon draws nearer to doves

On Page 1
 rch was almost alone in point-
 elately after the President's
 nation on May 8 that Mr.
 ntinuing to soften his peace

lement tried

A. Kissinger, the President's
 ty-affairs adviser, reported
 ret talks in Paris, he said
 ed to interest the North Viet-
 ilitary settlement only.

Feb. 9 that "the North Viet-
 at any proposal that did not
 elements could not even be
 our attempt to negotiate the
 separately was simply re-

Nixon has returned to the
 at the start of secret talks

arks

why the White House has
 it will respond to even the

most generous U.S. offers is shown in these
 remarks of Dr. Kissinger on May 9:

"The other side has asked of us, prior to
 a cease-fire, that the following steps must
 be taken:

"The President of South Vietnam must
 resign. What is called by the other side 'the
 machinery of oppression of government'
 must be disbanded.

"Pacification must be stopped. Vietnam-
 ization must be stopped, which means the
 end of American and economic aid. All per-
 sons who have been arrested on political
 grounds should be set free.

"Then a government should be formed
 which is composed of all those who favor
 peace, independence, neutrality, and democ-
 racy, presumably, by definition, including
 the Communists.

"In that government, in other words, the
 Communists would be the only organized
 force, since all the organized non-Com-
 munist forces would have been disbanded
 by definition."

It has never been the White House posi-
 tion that economic and military aid to
 Saigon could not, in time, be slimmed down.

But the qualification that Dr. Kissinger
 has always added is that there must be

a similar restriction on Soviet and Chinese
 assistance to the North Vietnamese.

Need for funds accepted

(Senator Church and other doves go along
 with the intention of the Nixon adminis-
 tration to give needed funds to the Saigon
 government. The Senator does point out
 under a change of government that broad
 someone like Gen. Duong Van Minh
 Minh) to the fore, there could be less
 reliance on U.S. aid.

There is no body of support, of any con-
 sequence, in the Senate for proposals for
 complete withdrawal without agreement on
 the POWs.

Despite the argument that the North Viet-
 namese will insist on political changes
 very favorable to them in the Saigon gov-
 ernment before releasing POWs, Senator
 Church remains "confident" the POWs
 would be released once an exact date was
 set for withdrawal of all troops.

Administration officials have many times
 said they have been up this alley many
 times and found it blind. The latest four-
 month offer to the North Vietnamese is a
 further try.